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NUTRITION

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News Letter

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NUTRITION AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Agricultural leaders and economists are stressing, as you know, adequate nutrition for all as one way of maintaining a prosperous economy. Nutritionists will find it heartening to be thus reinforced in their campaign to encourage greater consumption of milk, fruits and vegetables, and meat. Secretary Clinton P. Anderson recently outlined the Department of Agriculture's position in his address "Making the Best Use of the Agricultural Plant," in which he said: "The Nation's farm plant is supplying the greatest abundance of farm products the American people have ever known. It is doing its part in maintaining the surging economic lifestream of the Nation. The great challenge now is to make the best use in the years ahead of our agricultural plant.... Now we have ahead of us the twin problems of maintaining profitable outlets for the expanded capacity of our agricultural plant, and of adjusting the output of that plant to the demands of a peacetime economy.... The people of this country need and want more food than they were buying before the war...."

"Congress last year contributed greatly to the long-time welfare of agriculture—and to a sound total economy—by passing the Research and Marketing Act. . . . The act authorizes a scientific attack on the shortcomings of our distribution system as it applies to agricultural products. It is based on two fundamentals: (1) That our increased farm production puts greater responsibilities on our distribution system; and (2) that we want to perfect our distribution within the framework of American free enterprise. . . ."

"The last session of Congress also gave the Nation permanent school lunch legislation. This represents definite progress toward agriculture's long-time goal of gearing farm production to a higher nutritional standard. Sooner or later we shall need to strengthen that program with other efforts to improve nutrition and smooth out the short-term

peaks and valleys in demand so as to prevent waste of any agricultural production. But the permanent school lunch program does represent real progress toward better nutrition and expanded markets for farm products—changes that are needed to help provide opportunity to use the farm plant fully and efficiently....

"Our goal is not a return to prewar production—not even to the pattern of prewar agriculture. We seek new standards of nutrition for the people of our Nation—new levels of cooperation with those away from our shores who test their concepts of democracy by the performances of our industrial and agricultural plants. The miracles of wartime output must spur us to higher peacetime goals—goals that will use these great plants at full capacity to bring a new richness into the lives of us all...."

WORLD FOOD PROPOSALS

The goals of the U. S. Department of Agriculture as given in the preceding item are directly in line with the objectives of the Food and Agriculture Organization. The fact sheet sent you recently gives the recommendations worked out by the Preparatory Commission on World Food Proposals of FAO for achieving these objectives.

The first objective aims at providing diets on a health standard for the people of all countries through developing and organizing production, distribution, and utilization of basic foods.

The second objective—stabilizing agricultural prices at levels fair to producers and consumers alike—is to encourage farmers to produce enough food to feed all the hungry.

After 3 months of exhaustive study the Commission worked out a set of recommendations, important among which are:

Annual review, at the FAO Conference, of national agricultural and nutritional programs, so that governments can appraise their own plans in the light of the world situation and better coordinate their efforts.

Development of international commodity agreements and other intergovernmental arrangements for individual commodities to stabilize prices and expand production and consumption. Among other things, the agreements are to include—

- (a) Establishment of famine reserves, to be held nationally but used on internationally agreed terms.
- (b) Establishment of price stabilization reserves or "buffer stocks."
- (c) Sales of quantities above commercial demand at special prices to supplement diets of needy groups for which purchasing countries have definite nutritional programs certified by FAO.

Formation of a World Food Council, as an integral part of FAO, composed of representatives of 18 member governments.

Prompt creation by the United Nations, pending establishment of the proposed International Trade Organization, of a temporary coordinating committee to facilitate negotiation and operation of intergovernmental arrangements for primary commodities.

L. A. Wheeler, representative of the United States of America, in moving the adoption of the report at the final plenary session, said: "We believe in the importance of our objectives.... The essence of our findings is that our objectives of improved nutrition in the world and more stable agricultural prices cannot be achieved by uncoordinated national action. There must be effective international cooperation."

WILL CHILDREN DRINK RECONSTITUTED MILK?

Reports are starting to come in from the schools which are participating in an experiment to encourage consumption of nonfat dry milk. Information on acceptability received from 14 of the schools—4 in South Carolina, 4 in Mississippi, 3 in Arkansas, 2 in Georgia, and 1 in Alabama—indicates that—

1. The rate of acceptance ranges from 53.5 to 100 percent. Eight schools report an acceptance rate above 80 percent with six of them being above 90 percent. (The rate of acceptance is the percentage of children drinking one-half glass or more of milk.)
2. Acceptance is higher when teachers drink the milk and stress in their classes the value of drinking milk. In two schools where acceptability is low, many of the children live on farms and are accustomed to fresh milk.

3. In the eight schools in which flavored milk was occasionally served, acceptance usually increased; this extended to plain milk in two cases.
4. Acceptance rates are higher if the program is discussed with the children before serving the milk.

The teachers, principals, and lunch-room managers continue to express their approval of the program. One teacher observed that children are eating their lunches better since milk has been served.

Children's tastes vary as to concentration of the reconstituted milk. In two schools they prefer a drink made from 1½ pounds of dry milk and a gallon of water. In another, the single strength seems best, while in a fourth 1 1/5 pounds per gallon of water are used more frequently.

Reconstitution does not seem to have been a problem in most of the schools, and many schools find electric churns satisfactory. One lunch-room manager used the foam as she would whipped cream; others found that straining the milk reduced the foam and removed the small lumps that had not dissolved.

The nonfat dry milk is being tried in various cooked and baked dishes, in flavored drinks, and as a plain reconstituted beverage. The resulting products have a very good flavor and are liked by the children.

Altogether, 32 schools in 8 Southern States where fresh milk is short are taking part in this experiment. Since approximately 40 percent of all school lunches in Southern States last year did not include milk, a large proportion of the meals were deficient in calcium and riboflavin. The Food Distribution Programs Branch of the Production and Marketing Administration, with the cooperation of nutrition committees, undertook the study in an effort to explore the possibilities of using the dry product to supply these deficiencies. No school which can obtain supplies of fresh fluid milk is eligible to take part in this program.

The milk was purchased under the authorization in section 6 of the School Lunch Act. This section makes certain funds available for purchase of specific foods by the Department for direct distribution for the twofold purpose of improving the nutritive content of the children's diet and at the same time of developing a wider market for these foods.

In the same way concentrated orange and tomato juice were also purchased and

distributed in other areas. School lunch menus have often been found to be deficient in vitamin C foods, particularly during the winter and early spring months, and a direct purchase and distribution program for orange and tomato juice is doing much to compensate for these deficiencies.

These are specific ways in which the school lunch program is operating to counteract deficiencies in the dietaries of American children and to serve also as a very potent force for improving the food habits of the oncoming generation.

FELLOWSHIPS IN HEALTH EDUCATION

Fellowships, providing 1 year's graduate study in public health education at Yale, Columbia, Chapel Hill, and Ann Arbor, and consisting of 8 or 9 months of academic training beginning with the fall quarter 1947, and 3 months of supervised field experience in community health education, are being offered by the U. S. Public Health Service.

Applications may be secured from the U. S. Public Health Service, Washington 25, D. C. Prompt action is necessary if you are interested because the completed application must be on file in the Surgeon General's Office before March 15.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

MICHIGAN.—The program of the Michigan Nutrition Council is mainly that of keeping all organizations informed concerning activities on which concerted action is advisable, the chairman reports. At the fall meeting held November 26 in Ann Arbor, the program centered around the current food situation.

In discussing possible activities, the members expressed great interest in increasing the sale of iodized salt in Michigan. The Council is continuing its weekly radio program and the Committee on Nutrition in the Schools and School Lunch is carrying on an active program.

ILLINOIS.—Because he was "fed up on textbook teaching of nutrition with so little of it being carried over to the eating habits of teachers and pupils" the superintendent of schools for a southern Illinois county instigated a 2-day nutrition workshop for elementary teachers. He appealed for a Red Cross nutritionist to conduct the workshop and made teachers' attendance compulsory.

The workshop was held during the school year with a week's interval between the two sessions so that teachers might try out some of the things they learned the first day and bring more intelligent

questions and contributions to the second session. The course was partly lecture and partly demonstration, with a great deal of teacher participation. A convincing classroom demonstration was given by a teacher of a one-room school who has been doing an outstanding job of health teaching and who brought her entire school to the institute.

The superintendent reports that, although some of the teachers came to scoff, they all became enthusiastic before it was finished. No other training program has ever created so much interest or received such undivided approval, he said.

As a result of the workshop most of the teachers say they are benefiting by paying more attention to their eating habits and several indicate that their forenoon teaching has improved through having better breakfasts. The children's lunches are much better; they are eating more fruit and telling their mothers what to put in their lunch baskets.

At the teachers' suggestion nutrition courses for mothers are being planned in different parts of the county.

MINNESOTA.—In order to lay a firm foundation for activities to support flour and bread enrichment legislation at the 1947 session of the Minnesota legislature, it was decided to set up a committee composed of representatives from the basic seven food industries, each industry selecting its own representative. This committee would aid the Council in regard to legislation concerning food. Although the entire committee has not yet been established the nucleus of the group concerned with flour and bread enrichment legislation has been appointed. The whole advisory committee, representing all basic seven food industries, will not hold regular meetings but the various groups concerned with an individual problem will be called upon as the occasion demands.

The members of the Minnesota Restaurant Association have cooperated splendidly with the National Nutrition Program by distributing the Basic Seven charts as widely as practicable and by urging customers to select their meals so that each type is included. This has resulted in better balanced selections and an increase in the sale of salads and milk, the chairman reports.

IOWA.—At its November 8, 1946, meeting in Des Moines, the State Nutrition Council discussed program activities for

1947 and set up the following standing committees to facilitate the nutrition program in the State:

Committee on Nutrition Education to encourage nutrition as an integral part of education.

Committee on Professional Education to bring all professional groups up to date on pertinent nutrition information.

Committee on Lay Education to activate functional nutrition programs among lay and professional groups.

Committee on Nutritional Assistance to State Institutions to aid in evaluating present nutritional problems.

Committee on Food Production and Processing to operate in an advisory capacity to all other committees, as well as to prepare and dispense pertinent information to lay and professional groups.

The Council heard Paul S. Amidon describe the materials and methods he has worked out for teaching good nutrition practices to school children, as well as the result of food surveys.

The objectives of the school lunch program and the nutritional standards to be followed in preparing the meals were also discussed.

SOUTH DAKOTA.—A spot-check survey of food habits of school children is being made by the State Nutrition Committee in order to collect information on which to formulate more effective nutrition programs. The survey will cover 17 representative counties during January 1947. On the check sheet used in collecting the data, each child checks the foods he has eaten for his three previous meals. Each meal is tabulated separately to show the daily eating habits more clearly and the age distribution is recorded to give a better picture. A member of the State Nutrition Committee will direct the tabulation so that it is available for further use.

Other activities of the committee in 1947 will consist of nutrition programs for teachers' institutes and encouragement of greater participation in the school lunch program. The Parent-Teacher Association is actively cooperating in the nutrition program.

The State committee adopted a resolution recommending the enactment of adequate State school lunch legislation.

NEW MATERIALS (Samples not enclosed)

"Planning and Equipping School Lunchrooms" has recently been issued by the Office of Education as Bulletin 1946, number 19. Single copies can be secured by writing to that office in the Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.; if you want a number of copies, you may purchase them from the Government Printing Office at 10 cents a copy.

"So You've Been Asked to Make a Speech" is a 1-page mimeographed outline of the essential points to keep in mind in making a good talk. You can get a copy by writing to Dr. Gladys Gallup, Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

"National Food Guide." AIS-53. The August 1946 edition of this leaflet has been reprinted and is now available for distribution through the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

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Dr. R. R. Williams was in Washington February 5 to discuss the status of corn meal enrichment. He was on his way to visit Dr. E. J. Lease at Clemson, S. C., in the interest of extending enrichment of corn meal.

Sincerely yours,



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